

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Today Representative Xavier Becerra (CA-31), Vice Chair of the House Democratic Caucus, introduced the “Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Latin Americans of Japanese Descent Act”.

If signed into law, the legislation would create a commission to investigate and study the wartime actions taken by the U.S. government with regard to Japanese Latin Americans during World War II and make recommendations to Congress for any appropriate remedies based on their findings. The commission would be composed of nine members, three each appointed by the president, the speaker of the House, and the president pro tempore of the Senate.

“The commission will have an important purpose in completing the historical narrative about this sad episode in our history,” Rep. Becerra said. “I am proud to be working with Senator Daniel K. Inouye of Hawaii, a decorated World War II veteran and a tremendous public servant, who is also introducing an identical Senate companion measure today.

“Additionally, I am honored to have the indispensable support of the wonderful men and women of the Campaign for Justice and the Japanese American Citizens League. Without them this effort would lack the heart and soul essential to cross the finish line.”

Between December 1941 and February 1948, approximately 2,300 men, women, and children of Japanese ancestry were abducted from 13 Latin American countries and deported to internment camps in the United States. The U.S. government orchestrated and financed this operation with the intention of using these individuals as hostages in exchange for Americans held by Japan. Over 800 people, many who were second or third generation Latin Americans and had no familial or linguistic ties to Japan, were used in two prisoner of war exchanges. The remaining detainees were held in U.S. internment camps until after the end of the war.

The 1981 Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians report led to the Civil Liberties Act of 1988, which provided an official apology and financial redress to most of the Japanese Americans who were subjected to wrongdoing and confined in U.S. internment camps during World War II. This act was the culmination of a half century of struggle to bring justice to those to whom it was denied. However, Latin Americans of Japanese ancestry have not yet experienced the closure they deserve or obtained the justice to which they are entitled.

- Click [here](#) to read Rep. Becerra's floor statement introducing the bill.
- Click [here](#) to learn more about Rep. Becerra's legislation.

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